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that they have not labored in vain.

C. H. GRANDGENT.

Cambridge, Mass.

IRISH LITERATURE.

The Voyage of Bran Son of Febal to the Land of the Living. An Old Irish Saga now first edited, with Translation, Notes, and Glossary, by KUNO MEYER, with an Essay upon the Irish Vision of the Happy Otherworld and the Celtic Doctrine of Rebirth, by ALFRED NUTT. Section I, The Happy Otherworld, London: David Nutt, 1895 [Vol. iv of the Grimm Library].

THE *Voyage of Bran*, the poem which gives to this volume its name, and Professor Meyer's studies concerning it, appeal especially to the student of Celtic; the completed Part I of Mr. Nutt's essay, restricted also, in a sense, to Celtic ground, has for its purpose a study of the connection of the Happy Otherworld idea, as found in the poem, with that idea in other literatures. Such a study, even though, by necessity, in outline and not exhaustive (p. 228), is of interest and value to every student of comparative literature.

A reader approaching from this standpoint will at once be struck by the comparative unfamiliarity of the material of the Essay. The first four pages (115-118) include references to the 'sons of Mil' and the pre-Milesian period, the 'South Welsh chronicler Nennius,' the 'foundation of Emania,' the 'Amazon Macha,' 'Tigernach,' 'Loegaire Lorc,' 'Labraid Loingsiach,' 'Connaire Mor,' and the 'Togail Bruidne de Derga.' There are hundreds of equally unfamiliar names throughout the Essay. The impossibility of verifying so many statements again and again causes the reader to yield the critical spirit and follow the author wherever he leads. This not only requires the reader to repose much confidence in the author—no great task, indeed, when the latter happens to be Mr. Nutt—but forces both sense of proportion and judgement into abeyance, and makes his mental attitude unsatisfactory in that he must be credulous rather than critical.

On the other hand, much is added to the author's meed of praise when it is seen how

well, in spite of these especial difficulties of material and presentation, he has succeeded in giving this first systematic account of facts of Early Irish literature.

The matter is not, however, entirely strange. The struggle between Christian and anti-Christian literature is found here (p. 227) as elsewhere, events cluster around the somewhat familiar Connaught (p. 123, 209), we here meet again the *Mabinogion* (p. 129), the *Annals of The Four Masters*, and O'Grady's *History of Ireland*. We find hollow hill stories (p. 177) such as Irving made popular in *The Alhambra*, stories of dwellers beneath the sea (p. 181) as found in many literatures. In one place we see that Tennyson has anticipated us in his search for literary material (p. 236), in numerous ways Mr. Joseph Jacobs has preceded, and in very many directions Mr. Whitley Stokes has gone before. Many references of interest and of greater or less importance connect with Adamnan's Vision (pp. 219, 250, 253), and Ailill (pp. 202, 209); with Barlaam and Josaphat (p. 249), and with Brendan (pp. 161, 284, 300), the isle of sheep (p. 202), and the isle of birds (pp. 202 f., 205, 218, 225, 235), singing masses (p. 221), which he visited. There are connections with the Land of Cockayne (pp. 278, 321 f.), the Book of Enoch (pp. 254, 291), the Vision of Fursius (pp. 228, 245 n., 249, 253); with St. Patrick (pp. 152, 197, 218, 228), the Vision of Paul (p. 249), and the Anglo-Saxon Phoenix (pp. 245-248); with Thorkill (pp. 167 n., 172 n., 302), and Tundale (pp. 225, 228).

References to Amazons (p. 117), to food in Paradise which had to every man the flavor of his most favorite dish (pp. 30, 163 f.), to the legends of the Flood (p. 197), and to the Fourth Paradise (p. 203), should, perhaps, be classed among the semi-familiar. References to less known, although important, facts draw attention to a new (to the reader) tradition connected with the British coronation stone (p. 187 n.), to a certain mysterious five-fold crimson mantle (pp. 153, 180), which is mentioned more than once, to a method of preventing persons from ever again meeting, by waving a magic cloak between them (p. 157), to the method of producing sleep, by waving a branch of a certain tree (p. 190). Striking are tales of a cup (p. 191), a bit of common sod (p. 217), and a

boiled pig (p. 217), all of which could tell truth from falsehood.

Incidentally, it is possible to learn the ideals of adventure (p. 195), the ideas of strength and beauty (p. 145 n.), and the conception of the position of woman (p. 156 n.), which obtained in the times in which the legends grew up. Some of the conceptions are directly the reverse of those with which we are familiar; one hero must die when he touches the earth (p. 151), instead of being strengthened by every contact with her, as was Antæus, of Grecian fable. Very many of the stories either mention or describe the hero's enjoying a bath (p. 190). So many are obscure that incoherency has come to be considered a characteristic of Irish saga. Some very interesting material would find a place in a study of the idea of a Messiah, as found in literature not Hebrew. Remembering that the study deals with phenomena connected with, and proceeding from, the Irish mind, it is pardonable to expect, at least occasionally, something of humorous character. But in only a few of the stories studied are there traces of humor (pp. 198 n., 217). The evidence seems to show that the humorous tales, many of them depending for their effect upon incongruity of situation (pp. 210, 212), came late in the history of early Ireland (pp. 201, 204, 207). Beauty, beyond occasional slight touches, is even more conspicuously absent, although to the author (p. 234) some of the tales seem worthy of the term 'beautiful.'

Such is the material which the author, who has been studying it for more than twenty-five years (p. 210 n.), proposes to discuss.

The plan of the work (pp. 134 f.) is first, as a basis, to fix chronologically, so far as is possible, the place of the Voyage of Bran in Irish literature; then to attempt to answer the questions, suggested by the main episode of the story, as to the nature, age, and origin on Gaelic soil of the conception of the Happy Otherworld. By comparison of the Bran with other remains of Irish literature, the paradise ideal of the ancient Irish is to be elicited, and by comparison of this with the Christian ideal, the pre-Christian idea is to be got. The result is to be studied together with similar beliefs as found in Græco-Roman literature and that of other Aryan races, in the hope of

learning how far the non-Christian Irish belief is due to general Aryan mythic tradition, and how far to contact with the Græco-Roman world in very early and again in later Christian, but still, for the Irish, pre-historic, times. Whatever result is attained from this literary study must then be tested by archæology.

In following this plan the book is divided into twelve chapters, in the first two of which the Voyage of Bran is decided to belong in the last quarter of the seventh century (p. 141), and its conception of the Happy Otherworld is outlined. Parallel Irish tales of Connla (summary p. 149), Oisinn and Cuchulinn (summary p. 159), are studied in Chapter iii, while in Chapter iv is studied the *imrama* class, as typified by the *Voyage of Maelduin* (summary p. 173) and its derivative the *Navigatio S. Brendani*. Following upon the conception of the Happy Otherworld as the god's land (Chapter v) with the oversea and hollow hill (pp. 229 f.), lands of sensual (p. 182) and musical (p. 184) delight, came didactic and then romantic uses of the conception (Chapter vi). Independent and fragmentary preservations of the Happy Otherworld conception (immortality p. 212), the Irish version of the Christian Heaven, and the development of the Happy Otherworld idea in Irish legend, are discussed in Chapters vii, viii, and ix respectively. Such non-Irish Christian and Jewish analogues as the Anglo-Saxon *Phoenix*, the *Revelation of St. John*, the *Revelation of Peter*, the *Visio Pauli*, the *Vision of Saturnus*, *Barlaam and Josaphat*, the *Vision of Fursa*, *Adamnan's Vision*, the *Sibylline Oracles*, the *Lost Ten Tribes*, the *Conflict of the Apostles*, and *The Book of Enoch*, are compared in Chapter x, which ends with a study of the relation of Christian to Classic eschatology. The accounts of Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, Lucian, Horace, Claudian, and many other Classic authors are discussed in Chapter xi (pp. 281 f., 293 f.). Chapter xii, and last, studies Scandinavian (pp. 308 f.), Iranian, and Indian (p. 312) accounts. Pages 326 to 328 give a valuable chronological summary of the history of the idea, while the general conclusion of the work is given on page 331.

It is in the presentation that one notes most of the faults of the work since they grow, or seem to do so, from a desire to make it

both a popular and a scholarly book. No attempt is made to print the valuable bibliography which must have been gathered in the course of the study; the reader must be content with what scattered references, not always full, scholarly, or uniformly stated, he is able to gather here and there in the text and notes, and with a *List of Works Quoted in an Abbreviated Form* (p. 109), which contains but eleven titles, and these not alphabetically arranged.

The summaries given at the head of each chapter are brought together at the beginning of the volume, where they form an admirably accurate and full table of *Contents*, five pages in length. It is, however, much of a disappointment which the reader experiences upon turning to page 332, whither he is directed for the index to the volume, and finding a blank page only. A two-line note at foot of page 331 is to the effect that the index is delayed until the second part of the study, which, we are elsewhere informed, may be completed in another year or may never be completed.

The essence of the work shows the author a scholar, and evidences, in addition to his general familiarity with the realm (pp. 251 f.), that the particulars of the present work have been exhaustively considered. The field thus thoroughly examined for material, this material has been well and clearly worked over. Whatever of indefiniteness there may be in the volume is in the presentation, there is ample evidence that the problems and their solutions are clear in the mind of the author. The statements of fact are always fair; the reasoning is usually clear, forcible, and just, and the conclusions sane. Above all, there are no *ad hoc* arguments (pp. 139, 163). Upon important questions the minority report is always given, so that the reader may form his own conclusions, whether they agree with those of the author or not (pp. 301, 304).

The work is eminently honest. Indeed the extreme carefulness usually exercised against forming unwarranted conclusions may be the cause of the comparative meagreness of the conclusion to the whole volume. It is scarcely to be wondered at if a reader who has gone through the two hundred and thirty pages of the essay, feels that he has not got his due

when he arrives at the seven lines of tentative conclusion with which the volume closes (p. 331):

"The vision of the Happy Otherworld found in Irish mythic romances of the eighth and following centuries is substantially pre-Christian; it finds its closest analogues in that state of Hellenic mythic belief which precedes the modification of the Hellenic religion consequent upon the spread of Orphic-Pythagorean doctrines and with these it forms the most archaic Aryan presentment of the divine and happy land we possess."

For further conclusion one is referred to the, yet to be completed, second part of the study, on the Celtic doctrine of re-birth, which has been here and there mentioned throughout the work (pp. 134, 176 n.).

In the absence of any more definite and final conclusion upon the main theme of the essay—this tentative one is in no wise to be minimized—the value of the work is principally in systematically combining masses of detail hitherto well-nigh inaccessible to the general student. As valuable as the study is in its present form, one cannot help wishing that the summaries, given at various places throughout the essay, had been gathered together in a concluding chapter, which might have served as a starting-point from which the student of comparative literature might work back into the body of the essay, which is too long and too hard to read through, when on the search for details. Such a chapter and an index would have greatly increased the general usefulness of Mr. Nutt's essay, which will always be referred to as a valuable contribution to sound scholarship.

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ENGLISH POETRY.

Landscape in Poetry from Homer to Tennyson. By FRANCIS T. PALGRAVE. London: Macmillan and Co., 1897. 8vo, pp. xi, 297.

IN *Landscape in Poetry* Professor Palgrave shows the same fine taste with which, in 1861, he compiled the *Golden Treasury*. The passages he quotes form a delightful anthology of poetic landscape; otherwise the book is disappointing.